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Soviet Speeds Space Testing

MOSCOW (UPI) — The Soviet Union sent another unmanned satellite into orbit Monday in a stepped-up program of space research. Three "Cosmos" satellites were orbited Sunday.

Monday's vehicle is number 57 in the Cosmos series, started March 16, 1962. The Soviet news agency Tass said Cosmos 57 was operating "normally."

Nos. 54, 55 and 56 were orbited Sunday piggy-back fashion from a single rocket.

Moscow Radio made brief mention of the U. S. Ranger 8 picture-taking mission to the moon but the broadcast noted several American "failures" and called attention to a similar Soviet feat five years ago. The Russian vehicle obtained photos of the back side of the moon.

Laos Eyes Drive on Reds

VIENTIANE, Laos (UPI) — Government forces massed in northeast Laos Monday in preparation for an attempt to retake Hua Muong, a holdout position that finally fell to the Communist Pathet Lao a week ago.

Hua Muong had been the headquarters for two Laotian army battalions before the Communists took it after a two-month offensive.

Military sources say the Communists in Sam Neua province are trying to link up with their forces farther south in Xieng Khouang, which would give them a corridor across Laos.

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U. S. Harassing Charged

MOSCOW (UPI) — The Soviet Union charged Monday American ships and planes have been buzzing and harassing Soviet ships on the high seas.

This harassment is taking place "more and more often" near Viet Nam, the Soviet government said in a formal protest note to the U. S. embassy here.

It called this harassment "impermissible and dangerous actions" and demanded the U. S. government "take the necessary steps to prevent any such actions in the future . . . (or) the American side will bear all the responsibility for the possible consequences of such actions."

Britain Cuts Import Fees

LONDON (UPI) — The British government Monday cut from 15 to 10 percent its controversial import surcharge, effective April 27.

Members of the European Free Trade Association have complained about the surcharge, installed by the Labor government last fall to cut imports and reduce the trade deficit.

Edward Heath, Conservative spokesman on financial affairs, asked why the reduction was being delayed until April. He said it gave a clear indication to importers if they held up shipments for two months, their duties would be lower — and a rush of imports would follow. The reduction, he said, is "an unhappy compromise."

U. S. Accused in Laos Raid

TOKYO (UPI) — The Pathet Lao claimed Monday its forces shot down seven U. S. and Laotian air force aircraft during an attack Friday on Sam Neua province in northern Laos.

A Peking broadcast quoted the Pathet Lao as saying ground forces knocked down four U. S. jets. The U. S. Defense Department said in Wash-

ton it knew nothing of the Pathet Lao claim. However, it acknowledged one U. S. air force pilot, based in South Viet Nam, is missing in action.

The Chinese dispatch, quoting the Pathet Lao, said the planes brought down were four F101 and F105 jets, two T28s and one helicopter.